1305

COMIC SHOP NEWS™

PATHFINDER

Dynamite Finds Path to Success

Dynamite Entertainment, home to a diverse line of books that includes fantasy, horror, superhero adventure, Westerns, jungle action, and much more, has found room in its schedule for some RPG action.

No, they're not playing games—they're recreating them as comics in their new ***Pathfinder*** comics series. Dynamite has enlisted ***Skull Kickers*** writer *Jim Zubkavich* to helm the series, with *Andrew Huerta* supplying the art.

"From day one, when we were awarded the license for the ***Pathfinder*** comic we knew we had only one chance to make a great first impression for Pathfinder and comics fans," Dynamite publisher *Nick Barrucci* said. "Jim and Andrew are the perfect team for the series. It is great to have the opportunity to publish these wonderful comics; I also finally get the chance to work with *Jim Zubkavich*, a writer whom I have the upmost respect for, and Andrew's art is nothing short of breathtaking. And the covers by *Lucio Parillo, Matteo Scalera, Dave Dorman*, and *Erik Jones* are just astounding!

"***Pathfinder*** is a great property; Paizo has put a lot of time and effort into its development, they are passionate about it, they have a fantastic and dedicated fan base, and we felt we could do it right in comics form. We wouldn't be taking this on if we didn't feel we could do a great job on the series."

"***Pathfinder*** has blazed new trails in gaming and fiction, winning over thousands of fans all over the world. I'm absolutely thrilled to add to its mythology and flesh out the iconic characters at the heart of the Galorion world," Zubkavich said. "Sword and sorcery adventure pumps through my veins and I can't wait for readers to experience what Dynamite and I have planned."

Zubkavich is obviously the right man for the job. "I'm *definitely* an old school tabletop RPG player," he told ***CSN***. "I started playing ***Dungeons & Dragons*** first edition when I was eight years old, with the classic 'red box' set. My brother and our cousins were rabid players. Throughout high school I'd migrate through a slew of different RPG games with my friends as both a Game Master and player – ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Palladium Fantasy, Shadowrun, Call of Cthulhu,*** and ***Vampire: The Masquerade,*** to name a few. Even though I'm too busy now to maintain a regular gaming group, I still have a lot of love for the games."

How did his love of gaming lead to the assignment as writer of the ***Pathfinder*** comic? "I've known *Erik Mona* and the rest of the Paizo crew for quite a while," Zubkavich said. "As part of the UDON Studio, I contributed artwork to Paizo's D&D-related magazines (called, appropriately enough, ***Dungeon*** and ***Dragon***) and saw the staff quite frequently at conventions.

"Last summer at Gen Con Indy, Erik and I talked about ***Skullkickers,*** my creator-owned sword & sorcery action-comedy comic series, and he mentioned that I should stay in touch. Months later he contacted me and asked if I'd like to pitch on the ***Pathfinder*** comic. Everything I've seen and read in Pathfinder really impressed me and I was eager to show him and the fans what I could do with the property."

"Jim presented what we felt was absolutely the best pitch to launch ***Pathfinder,"*** Barrucci explained. "And *Andrew Huerta* has a style that is very kinetic and at times quite reminiscent of the work of *Joe Madureira*. We're very happy with the way that these to guys complement one another."

"I am thrilled with the work Jim Zub and Andrew have put into the ***Pathfinder*** comic book," Paizo Publisher *Erik Mona* added. "Jim's experience with fantasy and gaming make him the perfect writer for the series. Andrew's pencils are absolutely amazing, and bring an exciting and fresh new look to the characters, monsters, and lands of the ***Pathfinder Roleplaying Game***."

Pathfinder seems to be archetypal fantasy with many of the elements familiar to every role-player and fantasy reader: heroes, clerics, dwarves, rogues, wizards, etc. Will the comic feature the same archetypal elements? "It's *definitely* built from classic fantasy roots, but Paizo has done a great job at building a world with added depth and intrigue above and beyond those archetypal elements," Zubkavich said. "I pitched a character-first approach to the story, focusing on creating an engaging and enjoyable ensemble that readers can grow attached to issue by issue instead of coasting on brutally overdone fantasy stereotypes. This isn't a 'let's go slay the dragon' kind of story."

RPG-based fantasy often seems to walk the line between Tolkeinesque quest adventure and Howardian sword and sorcery; will Zubkavich's ***Pathfinder*** include elements of both? Does he lean more towards one or the other? (Gauging from his work on ***Skullkickers,*** he might be most infuenced by *Fritz Lieber's* Fafhrd-and-Gray-Mouser style fantasy.) "Tolkeinesque fantasy can be wonderful, but I'm definitely more of a pulp fantasy guy," Zubkavich explained. "There's an earthy/gritty quality to the flawed and violent protagonists in *Robert E. Howard/Fritz Lieber*-style fantasy stories, and that's where my love of the genre lies.

"***Skullkickers*** is all about tipping the whole thing overboard, taking the pulp qualities and bulldozing them with cartoonish violence and exaggeration, while ***Pathfinder*** is all about assembling a great cast of characters and really putting them through the wringer, physically and emotionally. They're both fantasy comic stories, but I get to focus on very different aspects and I'm really enjoying the challenge that comes with each."

How does he convert the far-reaching world of an RPG into comics? Will his ***Pathfinder*** series focus on iconic heroes to represent the various character types—a specific character for each type? "I think trying to represent the vast world of ***Pathfinder*** all at once would be a mistake," Zubkavich said. "The best way for me to bring ***Pathfinder*** to new readers and fans is to ensure that they care about our cast and their localized story first. Far-reaching material right off the bat would push people away—especially readers unfamiliar with ***Pathfinder.***

"Each of the characters in the Pathfinder comic is an 'iconic' character from the RPG, a previously-designed character used to represent each major character class. Beyond the visual design and a couple of sentences about their personality, these characters have never been fleshed out. Having the chance to take these recognizable characters and imbue them with histories, motivations and flaws has been the most enjoyable part of the process. I'm hopeful fans of the game will see them in a newer and richer light once we're done.

Zubkavich offered a brief introduction into ***Pathfinder's*** core cast. "Valeros is a mercenary fighter who has disobeyed orders so many times he's not quite sure how to be loyal to anything or anyone. His courage and temper make him a formidable and dangerous warrior.

"Seoni is a mysterious sorcerer whose tattooed body and mystical dreams make those who first meet her wary of her power. Strangers may call her a barbarian based on appearance, but her keen strategic mind gives her a distinctive edge in battle.

"Merisiel is an elven rogue whose glib banter and flashing smile lead people to assume that she's unintelligent and shallow. Her fears and long-lived life drive her in ways few will ever understand.

"Ezren is a middle-aged man who came to wizardry quite late in life. The march of time mixed with his desire for knowledge keeps him pushing himself to new limits.

"Harsk is a quiet and contemplative dwarven ranger with deeply-sown seeds of vengeance and anger buried under the surface.

"And Kyra is a battle-hardened cleric of Sarenrae who will stop at nothing to destroy evil, constantly testing her faith and will against those around her.

"The group has an even split between male and female, with a wonderful mix of personalities and desires all coming into conflict with each other. I'm excited about developing them through battles, success, failure, and romance as the series progresses."

How much of the ***Pathfinder RPG's*** world-creation will make it into the comic—and what does the ***Pathfinder*** comic add to the creative mix? "Everything in the comic syncs up properly with ***Pathfinder*** from the tabletop RPGs and novels," Zubkavich said. "I do as much research as I can on the area where the story takes place along with characters, creatures and other background material and then the folks at Paizo give it a once over for accuracy, taking the character-driven story I've come up with and making sure it all works in their amazing sandbox world."

Artist *Andrew Huerta* comes to ***Pathfinder*** from a very different background. "My knowledge of role-playing games is minimal, but I have always been a big fan of fantasy video games like ***Final Fantasy, Diablo, Chrono Trigger,*** and ***Legend of Zelda***. When I got hired to draw ***Pathfinder,*** I immediately looked at all the artwork, books and any other info I can find to get into this massive world. Also, while drawing pages of ***Pathfinder,*** I have fantasy films like ***Willow*** and ***Lord of the Rings*** playing in the background—all that stuff gets me in the mood to draw goblins and wizards! I'm learning all the elements all over again and I'm already getting better while working on ***Pathfinder.***"

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

Huerta isn't a newcomer to comics, but "this is my first ongoing series," the artist confirmed. "But I've been drawing since I was three years old, and have been working as a freelance artist for the past nine years. I've done some random sequential and cover work for Boom, IDW, Archaia, and a number of other indy comic publishers. Additionally, I'm currently working on a graphic novel—it's currently at page 14—and I feel that project had helped to prepare me for a gig like ***Pathfinder***."

For Huerta, the most challenging aspect of fantasy world-creation is "making things look epic and fantastic. I want to make ***Pathfinder*** look familiar and unique at the same time,—but I also try to make it seem like this world could really exist. It's definitely hard work, but I'm up for the challenge."

Huerta's major fantasy influences include "artists like *Frank Frazetta, Joe Madureira, Akira Toriyama, Yoshitaka Amano, Moebius, Bengus,* and *Kentaro Miura.* I try to figure out why their work has so much appeal and apply that essence and energy into my work. I'm also figuring out how to maintain the quality in my art while still being fast."

In addition to presenting an engaging fantasy adventure, Dynamite's ***Pathfinder*** will also include exclusive game-play material. "We're going to be placing additional game-related material in every issue of the series," Barrucci said. "Paizo is taking lead on the game related material, which includes exclusive additional maps for the game, which is yet another reason that ***Pathfinder*** RPG players are going to thoroughly enjoy this comic. The inclusion of bonus game-related material is the reason that we're making every issue of ***Pathfinder*** forty pages. In addition to the maps, we are including a bonus section in the back of each issue that will include character profiles, location descriptions, and more, in addition to the playable map."

Pathfinder #1, a $3.99 comic by *Jim Zubkavich & Andrew Huerta* with cover art by *Lucio Parillo, Matteo Scalera, Dave Dorman,* and *Erik Jones,* is slated for August 22nd release.

by Cliff Biggers

COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

Produced by *Comic Shop News* in cooperation with *newsarama.com*

Baby He's a Rich Man

If the name "Richie Rich" brings to mind a well-dressed poor little rich kid, then there's another side of Richie that writer *Buddy Scalera* would love to share with you.

Scalera is the writer of Ape Entertainment's ***Richie Rich*** series, which features an updated version of Richie, complete with his very own Rich Rescue team. "Rich Rescue is a modern adventure team that is *extremely* well funded," Scalera explained. "It takes the characters from the original ***Richie Rich*** series and brings them into a modern age, where the act like a superhero team that goes on epic adventures. We've been looking at major villains from the early ***Richie Rich*** comic series and giving them a more contemporary interpretation. It's still good, wholesome fun, but it delivers a lot of action and humor."

The stories seem to have a sort of ***Jonny Quest*** feel, but Scalera insists that's coincidental. "I feel a little embarrassed to say that I'm not terribly familiar with ***Jonny Quest,***" Scalera admitted. "I googled it,

though— and yeah, it seems to have some of that gee-whiz feel to it.

"With ***Richie Rich,*** we're taking an 'anything is possible' approach to the stories. The adventures work like a kid's mind works. They can go to any time or any place in pursuit of epic adventure. There are no props—which means if they meet dinosaurs, it's because they've temporarily travelled back into time to see real dinosaurs!"

Scalera credits a couple of uncredited "creative consultants" for his ***Richie Rich*** storytelling success. "I have two kids who are around the right age to read these stories. So I kid-test some of the ideas and scenes to see if they elicit a response. I'm really writing this series for kids, so their response is important to me. I had written one issue before I got to work on the series, so I had a chance to run some of the comics in front of my mini-focus group of my kids and their friends."

While the stories have a more adventure-focused, contemporary feel, Scalera is confident that old-time ***Richie Rich*** readers will discover some familiar elements as well. "I grew up with ***Richie Rich,*** so there are still distinct nods to the original stories. We're using all of the same characters and most of the relationships are anchored in the source material. Richie is still the heart of the book—and he's got Cadbury, the world's most capable butler. Neither of them are phased by this seemingly limitless wealth; they're just going along, having fun.

"Reggie is still shallow and whiny, but he brings a conscience to the team. He points out the ridiculousness of the situation (like climbing into an active volcano), but he's funny when he does it. Gloria has been modernized to be a confident and capable co-captain of the team. There are all kinds of supporting characters, including Dollar the Dog."

In the fifth issue of ***Richie Rich*** (which is in stores at the same time as this issue of ***CSN***), Scalera transforms Richie and his allies into superheroes. Will this remain as a potential story element for future issues? "I hope so," Scalera said. "They make for pretty amusing superheroes. Their personalities drove the kinds of heroes they became in the story. That makes it easier for kids to follow the story and understand their powers.

"We're not limiting the stories to any one genre. They've battled dinosaurs and pirates. They'll go underwater and into outer space. It's the ultimate vehicle for kid adventures, and I hope that the people reading this pick up a copy for their kids. Richie Rich was a gateway comic book that opened my imagination and made me want to read mainstream superhero stories. I'm hoping that these Richie Rich stories are the kinds of stories that make kids want to read more and discover comic books.

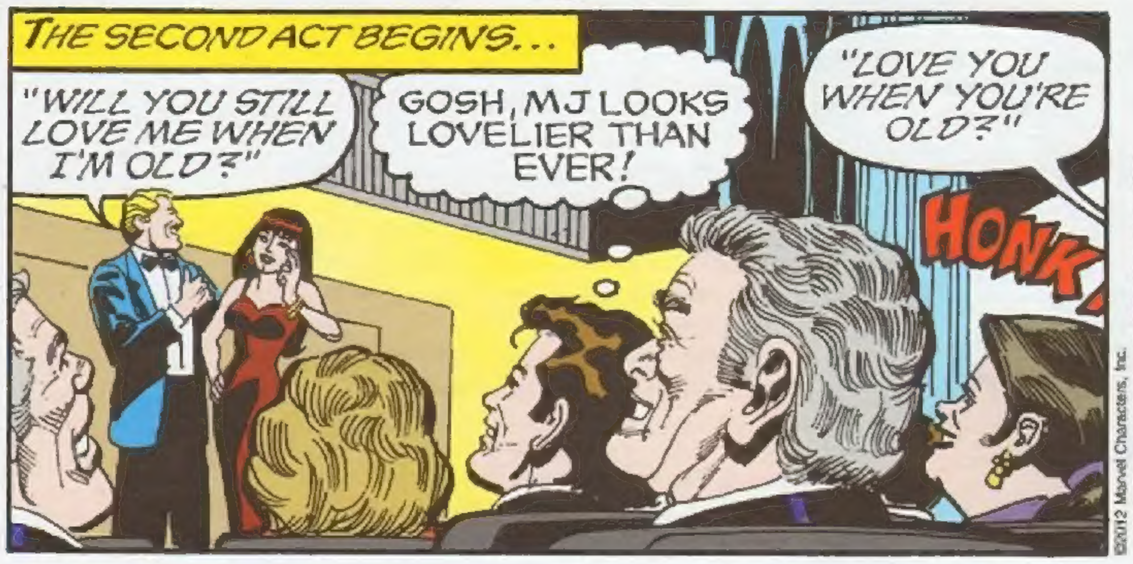
Richie Rich #5, a $3.99 by *Buddy Scalera, Patrick Rills, Silvani, & Marcelo Ferreira,* is in stores now; #6 is slated for release in the next few weeks.

CSNsider

•In case you missed the news, DC has announced that the Earth 2 Alan Scott, who is also the only Green Lantern of that universe, is gay. Readers can see Scott's story in ***Earth 2 #2*** (currently in stores) and ***Earth 2 #3*** (slated for July 4th release). "I'm very proud to be introducing Alan Scott into DC Comics—The New 52," series writer *James Robinson* told DC Comics' ***The Source***. "He was my favorite Golden Age character and one I'm very familiar with so I'm really excited to be updating him for a contemporary readership. However, I think old-time readers will be pleasantly surprised by how, in some ways, I'm trying to show the 'clas-

SPIDER-MAN

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER



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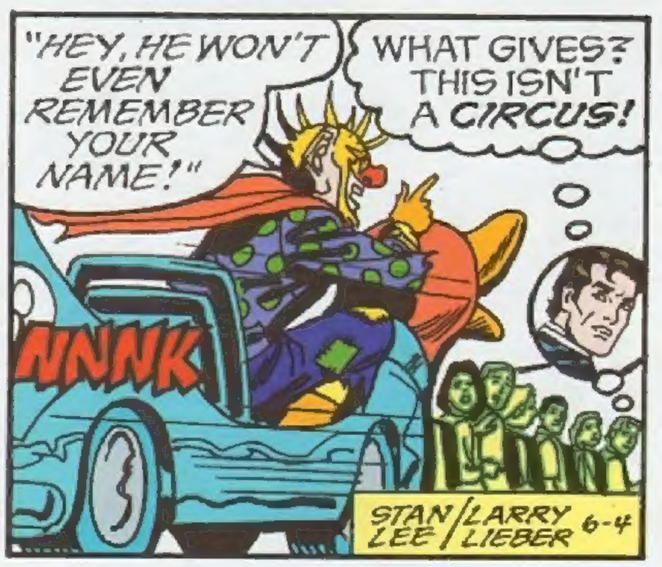

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sic' Alan Scott at the same time. He's still the same dynamic, heroic guy he was. He's still the head of a media empire like he was in his prior version, but of course with the form of media changing and evolving with the times. And in many ways, his origin mirrors the original one also. Oh, and on Earth 2 there is only one Green Lantern, so Alan's title is The Green Lantern. Alan's sexuality is just one facet of him, along with his innate goodness, valor, charisma and skill at leadership that makes him the perfect man to wield the power of the green light in the world of Earth 2."

•*Jeff Lemire's* ***Sweet Tooth*** is coming to an end with December's ***Sweet Tooth #40,*** but Lemire wants to make it clear that the series is coming to a planned end rather than being cancelled. "The decision to end it at #40 is entirely my choice," Lemire said on Vertigo's blog. "I suppose I could have stretched it out a bit longer. I cold have had a few more obstacles pop up along the way to Alaska to lengthen the journey (and the series), but it felt like *it was time.*

"I'll miss my little antlered friend. But I owe it to him to finish his story properly. To 'leave it all on the ice' as they like to say up here in Canada. And that means not prolonging the series just because I can.

"But don't give up on me. I really feel the best is still to come. The final arc, 'The Wild Kingdom,' will be full of everything you've loved about ***Sweet Tooth*** as well as many new surprises, new characters and new revelations. And it all builds to one final double sized, fully painted final issue with #40 this December."

•*Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning,* masters of the cosmic saga at both Marvel and DC, are demonstrating their grand storytelling skills once again in ***The Hypernaturals,*** a creator-owned series from Boom Studios set in an original universe of DnA's own creation. Set in the far future, ***The Hypernaturals*** takes place after the human race has finally colonized the galaxy, preserving an era of prosperity that's only possible because of The Hypernaturals. They're a celebrated, galaxy-wide superhero task force that keeps the peace... or at least they *were,* before they vanished. Now, as the galaxy teeters on the brink of chaos, it's up to a group of retired and long forgotten Hypernaturals—and their novice recruits—to save the galaxy from complete destruction.

"We are excited and thrilled to be in the DnA business, and it's clear from the fan reception that they're doing what they do best," Boom Founder and Chief Executive Officer *Ross Richie* said. "I'm excited to see where they can take things when the gloves come off in their own storytelling universe, where characters can die, major events can change, and Dan and Andy are unleashed to do their own thing, unfettered by decades of continuity or obligation to trademarks."

"I couldn't be more excited about this series," Boom editor-in-chief *Matt Gagnon* said. "DnA have built a devoted fan base by being phenomenal storytellers who bring integrity and passion to everything that they do. In ***The Hypernaturals,*** they truly take the gloves off and craft a breathtaking, original world."

The Hypernaturals #1 is slated for late July release.

•Hermes Press has announced plans to collect two ***Agent 13*** graphic novels originally published in the 1980s by TSR; *Howard Chaykin* supplies the original cover for the collection, which features the characters created by *Flint Dille & Dave Marconi.* As one might suspect, the reprinting is inspired by an upcoming film...

•Bad news for ***Infinity, Inc.*** fans: DC has cancelled orders for ***Infinity, Inc.: The Generations Saga Volume 2 HC,*** and there are no plans to resolicit the title.

•*Mark Millar & John Romita Jr's* ***Hit-Girl #1,*** the follow-up to ***Kick Ass 2,*** has been pushed back again; look for the book to reach comic shops on 6/27.

•Name change for ***Powers:*** The relaunched series, which was initially announced as ***Powers FBI,*** has been retitled ***Power Bureau.***

•*Nathan Edmondson* has enlisted some pretty high-powered help for ***The Activity #7,*** which launches a new story arc that follows members of Team Omaha to Uzbekistan after incriminating evidence is discovered

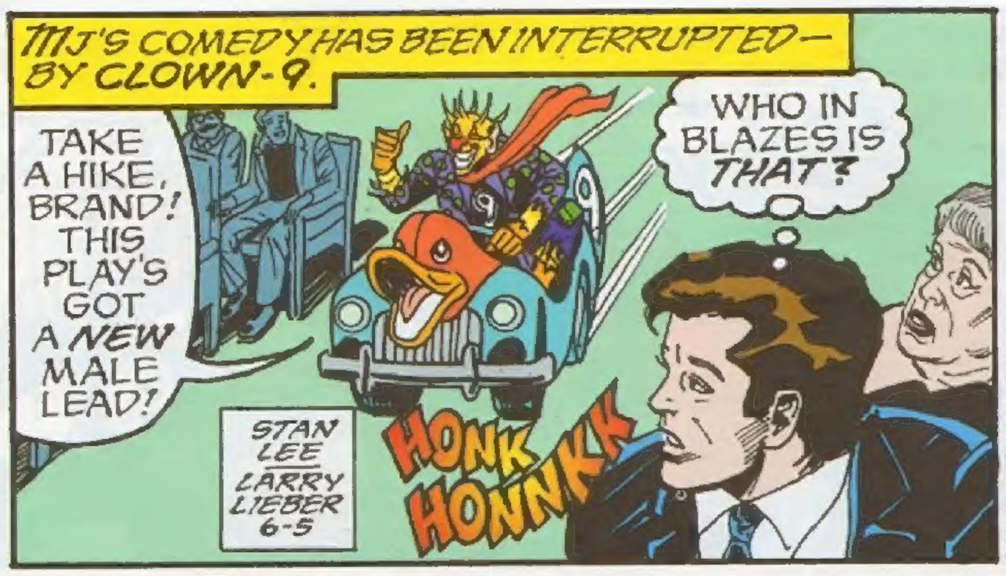
THE ACTIVITY 7

on a Chinese freighter. The "Goat Hunt" story arc is co-written by Navy SEALs (whose real names, obviously, cannot be revealed) to ensure that the book about covert operatives is as authentic as possible. Look for it in mid-July.

•"So what's the deal with July 4th and new comics?" *CSN* has received about two dozen derivations of that question in recent weeks, and with good reason: this year's July 4th holiday falls on a Wednesday, and this is the first Wednesday holiday since Diamond Comics Distributors implemented their Day Early Delivery program for participating retailers.

This system allows the majority of stores to receive new releases on Tuesday, contingent upon their agreement not to sell or display those comics earlier than the Wednesday release date. Since Tuesday, July 3rd, is a normal business day for UPS and other commercial carriers, this means that Wednesday, July 4th will be New Comics Day for any and all stores that choose to open for business that day. Stores that take July 4th as a holiday will have new books for sale on Thursday, July 5th.

Check with the staff at your friendly neighborhood comic shop to find out how their schedule will be affected by the Wednesday holiday; it's up to each store to determine their schedule for the holiday week, of course. (We should point out that stores that do *not* participate in the Day Early Delivery Program will receive new releases on Thursday, July 5th.)


MJ'S COMEDY HAS BEEN INTERRUPTED— BY CLOWN-9.
TAKE A HIKE, BRAND! THIS PLAY'S GOT A NEW MALE LEAD!
WHO IN BLAZES IS THAT?
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 6-5
HONK HONNKK
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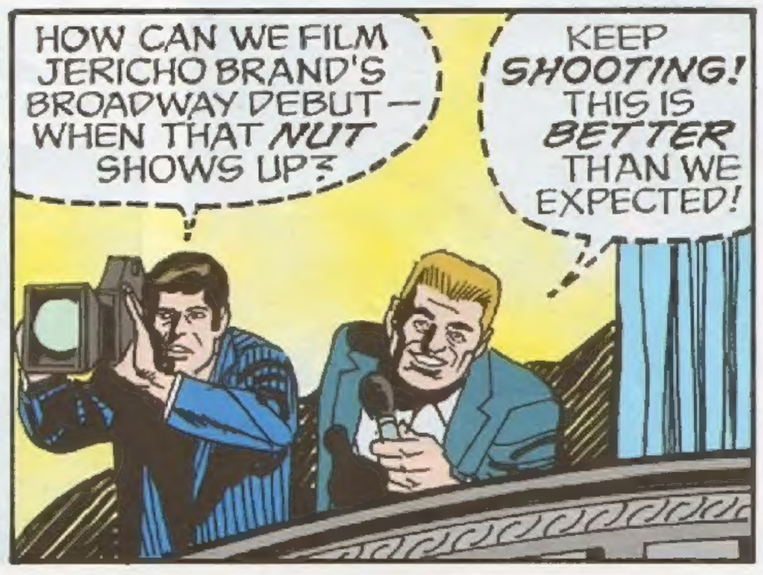
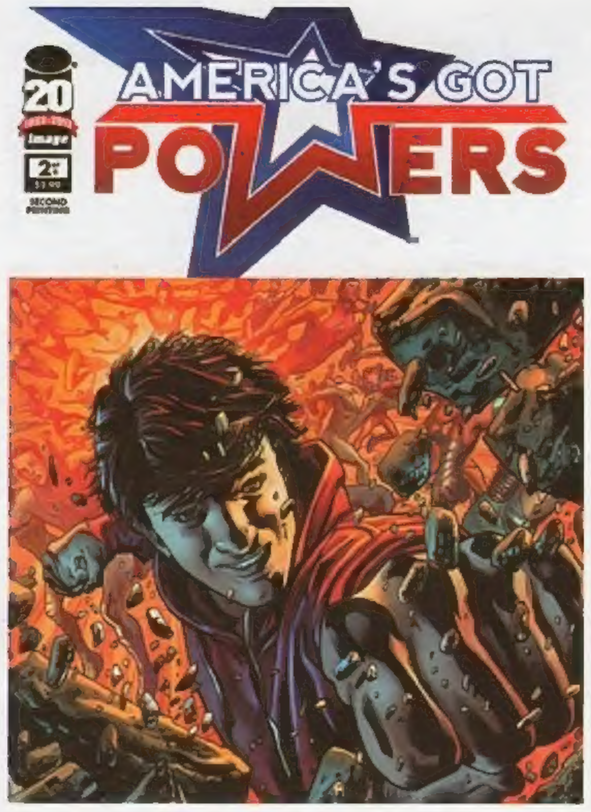




Back to Press

- ***America's Got Powers #2 2nd Printing*** *(APR128259)*, in stores 6/27.
- ***Astonishing X-Men #51 2nd Printing*** (APR128241), featuring a variant cover by *Dustin Weaver*, in stores 6/27.
- ***Avengers Vs. X-Men #0 5th Printing*** (APR128247), featuring a variant cover by *Frank Cho*, in stores 7/4.
- ***Avengers Vs. X-Men #1 5th Printing*** (APR128248), featuring a variant cover by *Jim Cheung*, in stores 7/4.
- ***Avengers Vs. X-Men #2 5th Printing*** (APR128249), featuring a variant cover by *Jim Cheung*, in stores 7/4.
- ***Batman #1 5th Printing*** (APR128233), featuring a recolored version of the original cover, in stores 6/27.
- ***Batman #5 4th Printing*** (APR128234), featuring a recolored version of the original cover, in stores 6/27.
- ***Extermination #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128253), in stores 7/11.
- ***Frankenstein Alive, Alive #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128213), in stores 7/11.
- ***Godzilla Ongoing #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128229), in stores 7/18.
- ***Grim Leaper #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128252), in stores 6/27.
- ***Hardcore #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128198), in stores 6/27.
- ***Justice League #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128235), featuring a recolored version of the original cover, in stores 6/27.
- ***Star Trek: The Next Generation/Doctor Who: Assimilation #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128111), in stores 6/27.

- ***X-O Manowar #1 2nd Printing*** (APR128197), featuring a variant cover by *Arturo Lozzi*, in stores 6/27.

AQUAMAN #11

Geoff Johns (W); Ivan Reis & Joe Prado (A)
(DC MAY120201 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

The Others finally catch up with Black Manta... but are they united enough to get the job done?

Why Should You Care?

Under *Geoff Johns*, Aquaman has graduated from quirky second-string hero to one of DC's superstars. Of course, we shouldn't be surprised—Johns did the same thing with the Flash and Green Lantern, so was there any doubt that Aquaman was destined for similar success?

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #5

Brian Bendis (W); Mark Bagley (A)
(Marvel MAY120658 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

The Avengers continue to wage war against the Zodiac and Thanos... but what does it all mean for the future of the Marvel Universe—and who is about to side with the Avengers in this cosmic war?

Why Should You Care?

Briand Bendis & Mark Bagley deliver the core Avengers whose adventures thrilled millions in this summer's hit film—*and* they deliver the major bad guy who's surprise cinematic appearance has everyone talking. Veteran readers and those who just discovered the Avengers through the movies will find plenty to enjoy in this high-energy series.

CSN TOP COMIC

AVENGERS VS X-MEN #7 (OF 12)

Jonathan Hickman (W); Olivier Coipel (A)
(Marvel MAY120637 $3.99)

AVENGERS VS X-MEN #8 (OF 12)

Jonathan Hickman (W); Olivier Coipel (A)
(Marvel MAY120643 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Cyclops changes everything with the words "No More Avengers!" Namor invades Wakanda in pursuit of the Avengers, and a shocking revelation threatens the X-Men's alliance!

Why Should You Care?

The war between Marvel's most popular superteams escalates even further, with ramifications that threaten (or should we say "promises"?) major changes to Marvel's status quo.

BATMAN: EARTH ONE HC

Geoff Johns (W); Gary Frank & Jonathan Sibal (A)
(DC MAR120234 $22.99)

What's the Scoop?

Witness Bruce Wayne's transformation into Batman in this contemporary reinterpretation of the classic tale of Batman's origins and first year.

Why Should You Care?

When DC first presented a 21st century reinvention of the Man of Steel in ***Superman: Earth One,*** the result was one of the best-selling original graphic novels in the company's history. Now the company is taking the same approach with Batman, and they've enlisted their most talented storyteller, *Geoff Johns*, to reinvent the Dark Knight in modern terms.

BEFORE WATCHMEN: COMEDIAN #2 (OF 6)

Brian Azzarello (W); J.G. Jones (A)
(DC MAY120188 $3.99)

BEFORE WATCHMEN: MINUTEMEN #2 (OF 6)

Darwyn Cooke (W/A)
(DC MAY120180 $3.99)

BEFORE WATCHMEN: OZYMANDIAS #1 (OF 6)

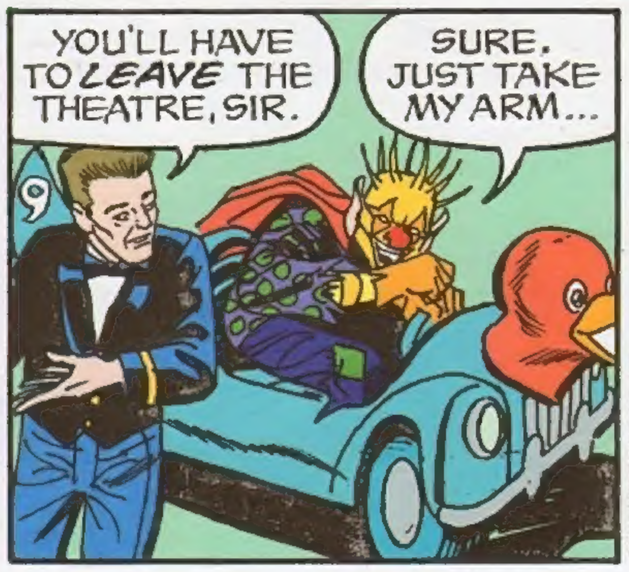
Len Wein (W); Jae Lee (A)
(DC MAY120174 $3.99)

BEFORE WATCHMEN: SILK SPECTRE #2 (OF 4)

Darwyn Cooke (W); Amanda Conner (A)
(DC MAY120184 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Some of comics' finest talents continue to explore the early, formative experiences of *The Watchmen's* heroes (and anti-heroes) in these provocative limited series that expand on the world that *Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons* created. (And you'll want the whole set so that you can enjoy *Len Wein & John Higgins'* ***Crimson Corsair*** backup feature that runs through each issue.)



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CS: JULY

Why Should You Care?

Who watches the *Before-Watchmen*? Pretty much everyone, that's who—and with good reason!

BLOODSHOT #1

Duane Swierczynski (W); Manuel Garcia & Arturo Lozzi (A)

(Valiant MAY121309 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

He's the product of Project Bloodshot, and there are agencies that want to take him in... or take down. However, neither option is easy when your target is a living weapon!

Why Should You Care?

Duane Swierczynski pulls out all the stops with the relaunch of one of Valiant's most popular characters. Espionage, adventure, revenge, suspense.. it's all in here! If you like the Punisher, you'll love *Bloodshot!*

CAPE 1969 #1 (OF 4)

Joe Hill & Jason Ciaramella (W); Nelson Daniel (A)

(IDW MAY120426 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

A Medevac chopper pilot is shot down over enemy territory in 1969 Vietnam, forcing him and his crew into a deadly game of cat and mouse with the Viet Cong. But machine guns and grenades aren't the only scary things hiding in the jungle...

Why Should You Care?

Joe Hill, Jason Ciaramella, & Nelson Daniel present a surprising origin prequel to last year's Eisner-nominated *The Cape*, adding a surprising new facet to the saga.

CHEW: SECRET AGENT POYO #1

John Layman (W); Rob Guillory (A)

(Image MAY120497 $3.50)

What's the Scoop?

Chew's most popular supporting character (and comics' most beloved homicidal cybernetic kung-fu rooster) graduate to their own oneshot adventure!

Why Should You Care?

This one's not really that tough, is it? *Chew* continues to sell out, month after month. Readers have nothing but love for this eccentric series and is offbeat cast of characters. And now *John Layman* is expanding the franchise with its first spinoff oneshot. Need yet another reason? Well, there's a pin-up gallery featuring work from some of the industry's most talented artists...

CROW #1

John Shirley (W); Kevin Colden (A)

(IDW MAY120349 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

The Crow is reborn in Tokyo, transfiguring an American student who has lost the love of his life. Now it's time to right the wrong...

Why Should You Care?

At long last, *James O'Barr's* gothic spirit of loss avenged is returning to comics in an all-new series—and it's written by *John Shirley*, who co-scripted the screenplay for the cult favorite *Crow* film (so he really knows his Crow!).

EARTH 2 #3

James Robinson (W); Nicola Scott & Trevor Scott (A)

(DC MAY120197 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

Alan Scott makes his Earth 2 Green Lantern debut as DC's New 52 Multiverse series continues.

Why Should You Care?

A New 52 brings a New Earth 2—a world that is not the Golden Age inspiration for the current DCU, but a parallel world with its own history, its own crises, and its own superheroes who have developed totally separate from the New 52 world. And as the first issue revealed, *James Robinson* has shocking surprises in store in this strange new world!

FINDING GOSSAMYR #1

David Rodriguez (W); Sara Ellerton (A)

(Th3rd World MAY121282 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

A brilliant young boy *almost* solves the world's most perplexing mathematical theorum...And then he walks away. But why does he refuse? And what is the connection between this theorum and the fantastic realm of Gossamyr?

Why Should You Care?

One of the most lauded books of FCBD 2012 launches as an ongoing series, presenting a blend of memorable characters and imaginative fantasy, built on a mathematics framework. Believe us—this is a comic that readers will be talking about for years to come!

HYPERNATURALS #1

Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning (W); Brad Walker (A)

(Boom MAY120940 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

When humanity's superheroic protectors suddenly vanish at the moment when the galaxy needs them most, it's up to retired and long forgotten heroes—and their novice recruits—to save the human race from complete destruction.

Why Should You Care?

Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning, who have proven themselves to be masters of the cosmic drama at both Marvel and DC, lead this creator-owned foray into the far reaches of the galaxy in this blend of superheroics and science fiction adventure.

JUSTICE LEAGUE #11

Geoff Johns (W); Jim Lee (A)

(DC MAY120192 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

New villain Graves continues to challenge the Justice League in the third part of "The Villain's Journey," while Element Woman battles Batman, Cyborg, and Aquaman.

Why Should You Care?

Geoff Johns & Jim Lee continue to explore the origins and motives of the League's newest adversary... but what are his motives for taking on the most powerful team in the New 52?

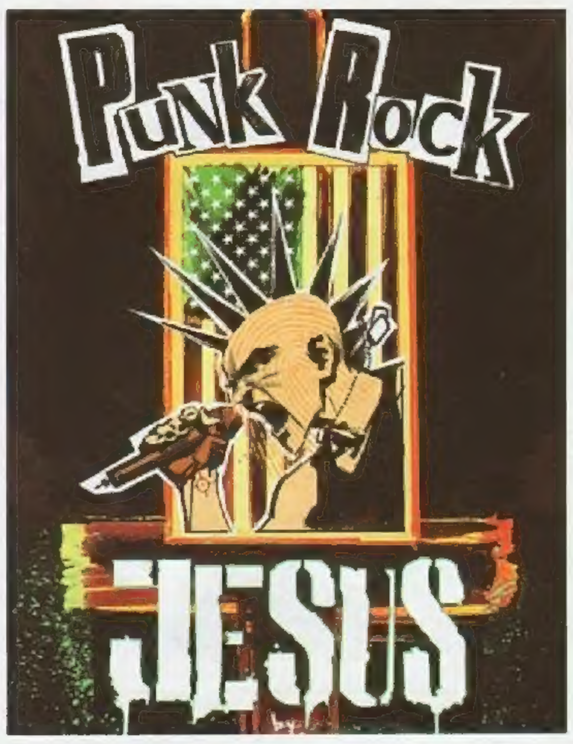
PUNK ROCK JESUS #1 (OF 6)

Sean Murphy (W/A)

(Vertigo/DC MAY120316 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

Jesus Christ is cloned—and now that clone is at the center of a television series that's stirring up controversy among religious, political, scientific, and ethical circles. Witness it all through the eyes of the young woman chosen to be the host mother of the new Messiah and the former IRA operative hired to protect him.



Why Should You Care?

This is the sort of story that Vertigo does best—irreverent, controversial, and provocative.. And with a storyline sure to stir strong emotions, *Punk Rock Jesus* promises to be the Vertigo series everyone is talking about!

REVIVAL #1

Tim Seeley (W); Mike Norton (A)

(Image MAY120495 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

For one day in rural central Wisconsin, the dead came back to life. Now it's up to Officer Dana Cypress to deal with the media scrutiny, religious zealots, and government quarantine that has come with them. And if that isn't enough to worry with, she also has to solve a brutal murder—and everyone, alive or undead, is a suspect!

Why Should You Care?

Not just another zombie story, *Revival* combines a "day after" approach with a suspenseful whodunnit, and the result is unlike any zombie comic you've read before!

SOULFIRE: DESPAIR #1

David Schwartz (W); Jonathan Marks (A)

(Aspen MAY120869 $3.99)

SOULFIRE: FAITH #1

Amanda McMurray (W); Siya Oum (A)

(Aspen MAY120871 $3.99)

SOULFIRE: GRACE #1

J.T. Krul (W); Pasquale Qualano (A)

(Aspen MAY120875 $3.99)

SOULFIRE: POWER #1

David Wohl (W); Khary Randolph (A)

(Aspen MAY120873 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

Aspen launches its first-ever *Soulfire* summer event with a weekly saga built around a quest to find the missing Malikai and restore order to the world!

CLOWN-SHAPED BALLOONS SPRING FROM THE ODD CAR THAT'S INVADED MJ'S BROADWAY SHOW...
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN KEEPING COUNT— THAT'S EIGHT SO FAR—
SO I GUESS THAT MAKES ME "CLOWN-9"!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 6-7
HE'S BATTY ENOUGH TO BE DANGEROUS!
TIME FOR SPIDER-MAN TO DROP IN!
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Why Should You Care?

At last, ***Soulfire*** gets the attention it deserves in this fast-paced epic tale sure to appeal to fans of *Game of Thrones....* and its finale will change the world of ***Soulfire*** forever.

WALKING DEAD #100

Robert Kirkman (W); Charlie Adlard & Cliff Rathburn (A)

(Image MAY120469 $3.99)

What's the Scoop?

One of the darkest moments in Rick Grimes' life is the focus of this pivotal issue—and it leads to one of the most brutal scenes in the history of *Walking Dead.*

Why Should You Care?

Robert Kirkman's history-making post-apocalyptic drama continues to make history—and to celebrate the event, Kirkman has enlisted the help of *Marc Silvestri, Frank Quitely, Todd McFarlane, Sean Phillips, Bryan Hitch, Ryan Ottley,* and *Charlie Adlard* to supply the commemorative variant covers.

WONDERLAND #1

Raven Gregory (W); Robert Gill (A)

(Zenescope MAY121360 $2.99)

What's the Scoop?

Calie Liddle thought she was finally free from the realm of madness that is Wonderland... but now she realizes how wrong she was, and she and her daughter Violet find themselves on the run.

Why Should You Care?

Alice in Wonderland, which generated one sell-out after another for Zenescope proved that there's still plenty of interest in the Liddle family and the bizarre world of Wonderland!

Check 'Em Out: Comics You *Should* Be Reading!

ADVENTURE TIME: MARCELINE—SCREAM QUEENS #1

(Boom MAY120990 $3.99)

Adventure Time proved to be such an amazing success with readers of all ages that Boom has put together a spinoff series starring Marceline & Princess Bubblegum as Marceline's paranormal rock band sets out on a tour across the land of Ooo.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #689

(Marvel MAY120666 $3.99)

Timed to take advantage of this summer's ***Spider-Man*** film, this story arc pits Spidey against the Lizard... but hasn't Curt Connors been cured?...

GREEN LANTERN #11

(DC MAY120242 $2.99)

"The Revenge of Black Hand" starts here, courtesy of *Geoff Johns & Doug Mahnke*—and DC warns that this arc will present the most shocking conclusion of any issue in *Geoff Johns' **Green Lantern*** run.

HAMMER AND THE ANVIL GN

(Hill & Wang MAY121181 $24.95)

Dwight Jon Zimmerman & Wayne Vansant (one of the most skilled and knowledgeable war artists working in comics today) explore the history of slavery, the Civil War, and emancipation through the lives of *Abraham Lincoln* and *Frederick Douglass.*

JERICHO SEASON 4 #1 (OF 5)

(IDW MAY120353 $3.99)

Thanks to the original writing staff of the television series, ***Jericho*** is back with a vengeance in this series presenting a whole new chapter of stories told in the show's official continuity.

PHILOSOPHY: A DISCOVERY IN COMICS HC

(NBM MAY121212 $16.99)

Margaret De Heer offers a comic book look at the motives and purposes of philosophy, along with an overview of the world's most influential philosophers.

WIZZYWIG HC

(Top Shelf MAY121293 $19.95)

Presenting the real-world story of master manipulator *Kevin Phenicle* and his journey from precocious child scammer to federally-wanted fugitive deeply involved in the world of phone phreaks and hackers.

Collected Cool: July's Best Reprint Editions

ABSOLUTE FINAL CRISIS HC

(DC DEC110288 $99.99)

This deluxe slipcased collected edition of *Grant Morrison's **Final Crisis*** saga includes the miniseries, tie-in books, sketchbooks, and much more—including original pages produced especially for this edition!

BERNIE WRIGHTSON'S MUCK MONSTER ARTIST EDITION PORTFOLIO

(IDW MAY120370 $29.99)

This Deluxe Artist's Edition portfolio, reprinting the fineline horror classic tale originally done for the Warren horror magazines shot from Wrightson's original art and reproduced same size—it's as close as you'll get to owning the original art!

BLACKSAD: SILENT HELL HC

(Dark Horse MAR120053 $19.99)

Detective John Blacksad return in a new canus noir drama by Canales & Guarnido that takes Blacksad to 1950s New Orleans to discover the fate of a celebrated pianist.

CREEPY PRESENTS RICHARD CORBEN HC

(Dark Horse MAR120047 $29.99)

The third themed volume of stories from ***Creepy*** and ***Eerie*** collects all of *Richard Corben's* Warren Magazines work in a single 300+ page volume.

DAVE STEVENS STORIES & COVERS HC

(IDW APR120321 $49.99)

While he's best known for ***The Rocketeer,*** *Dave Stevens* illustrated dozens of covers, and they're all collected here (many shot from the original art!), along with all of his non-***Rocketeer*** comics work, including incomplete and unpublished stories.

NEAL ADAMS' THRILL KILL ARTIST EDITION PORTFOLIO

(IDW MAY120371 $29.99)

One of the most powerful stories *Neal Adams* ever illustrated for Warren, a tale of a young mass murderer on a killing spree, is presented in IDW's Artist's Edition format, complete with full color scans of the black and white art, which is reproduced at full size to simulate the look of the actual art pages.

SERGIO ARAGONES' GROO THE WANDERER ARTIST EDITION HC

(IDW APR120328 $150.00)

This deluxe Artist's Edition reproduces a four-part *Sergio Aragones **Groo*** miniseries in its entirety, shot from the original art and reproduced in lavish detail in the same size as the original art.

SHOWCASE PRESENTS RIP HUNTER, TIME MASTER TP VOL 1

(DC APR120257 $19.99)

DC's first time-travelling hero gets his own collection at last; this volume includes ***Showcase #s 20, 21, 25, & 26*** and ***Rip Hunter: Time Master #s 1-15,*** featuring work by *Alex Toth, Ruben Moreira,* and others.

SHOWCASE PRESENTS SHOWCASE TP VOL 1

(DC MAR120257 $19.99)

This hefty volume reprints ***Showcase #s 1-21,*** including the first appearances of the Flash, the Challengers of the Unknown, Adam Strange, and others—including early non-superhero stories rarely (if ever) reprinted until now.

FYI: Must-Have Additions to Your Reference Library

BILL THE BOY WONDER: SECRET CO-CREATOR OF BATMAN HC

(Charlesbridge MAY121422 $17.95)

The unsung co-creator of Batman and many of his most noteworthy allies and adversaries gets his moment in the sun in this brief but informative look at the career of *Bill Finger.*

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COMIC BOOKS AND COLD WAR 1946-1962 SC

(McFarland MAY121424 $40.00)

The Red Menace, the nuclear threat, encroaching communism—not only were these themes at the core of many of Marvel's early heroes, they were also a major aspect of many other comics between 1946 and 1962, as this fascinating analysis reveals.

CEREBUS: THE BARBARIAN MESSIAH SC

(McFarland MAY121423 $45.00)

Cerebus may have begun as a ***Conan*** pastiche, but it grew into one of the most complex, insightful, and sometimes controversial independent comics ever published. This collection of critical essays on *Dave Sim's* 300-issue saga offers new insights and thought-provoking commentary on the book and its creator.

JEWISH IMAGES IN THE COMICS HC

(Fantagraphics MAY121134 $26.99)

Fredrik Strömberg explores the way Jewish culture has been depicted in comics; famous creators like *Art Spiegleman* and *Will Eisner* are spotlighted, along with much more obscure writers and/or artists. Each example is spotlighted via an informative essay and a representative illustration.

MARIE SEVERIN: MIRTHFUL MISTRESS OF COMICS SC

*(TwoMorrows MAY121304 $24.95_*

This look at the lengthy career of Marie Severin, from her EC days through her years at Marvel and beyond, contains revealing and often amusing insights of her close friends including *Stan Lee, Al Feldstein, Roy Thomas, John Romita, Jack Davis, Jack Kamen, Tony Isabella, Gene Colan, Jim Mooney, Joe Sinnott, Mark Evanier,* and *David Anthony Kraft,* plus extensive commentary by Marie herself.

OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE HC VOL 42

(Gemstone MAR121080 $35.00)

OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE SC VOL 42

(Gemstone MAR121079 $29.95)

The latest edition of this vital comics reference is far more than a guide for buying and selling comics; it includes information on key issues, first appearances, and much more, making it an essential addition to any reference library

SEXUAL IDEOLOGY IN THE WORKS OF ALAN MOORE SC

(McFarland MAY121434 $40.00)

This collection of essays scrutinizes analyzing the sexual politics and themes that play a major role in the works of Alan Moore—and of course, ***Lost Girls*** gets *lots* of attention...

Hot Commodities: July's Hottest Merchandising & Collectibles

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN MOVIE STATUE

(Diamond Select MAR121596 $125.00)

Gentle Giant does the sculpt for this striking statue that depicts Spidey in his movie costume against the sheer glass wall of a New York City skyscraper.

DARK KNIGHT RISES: BANE 1/12 SCALE STATUE

(DC Collectibles APR120303 $79.95)

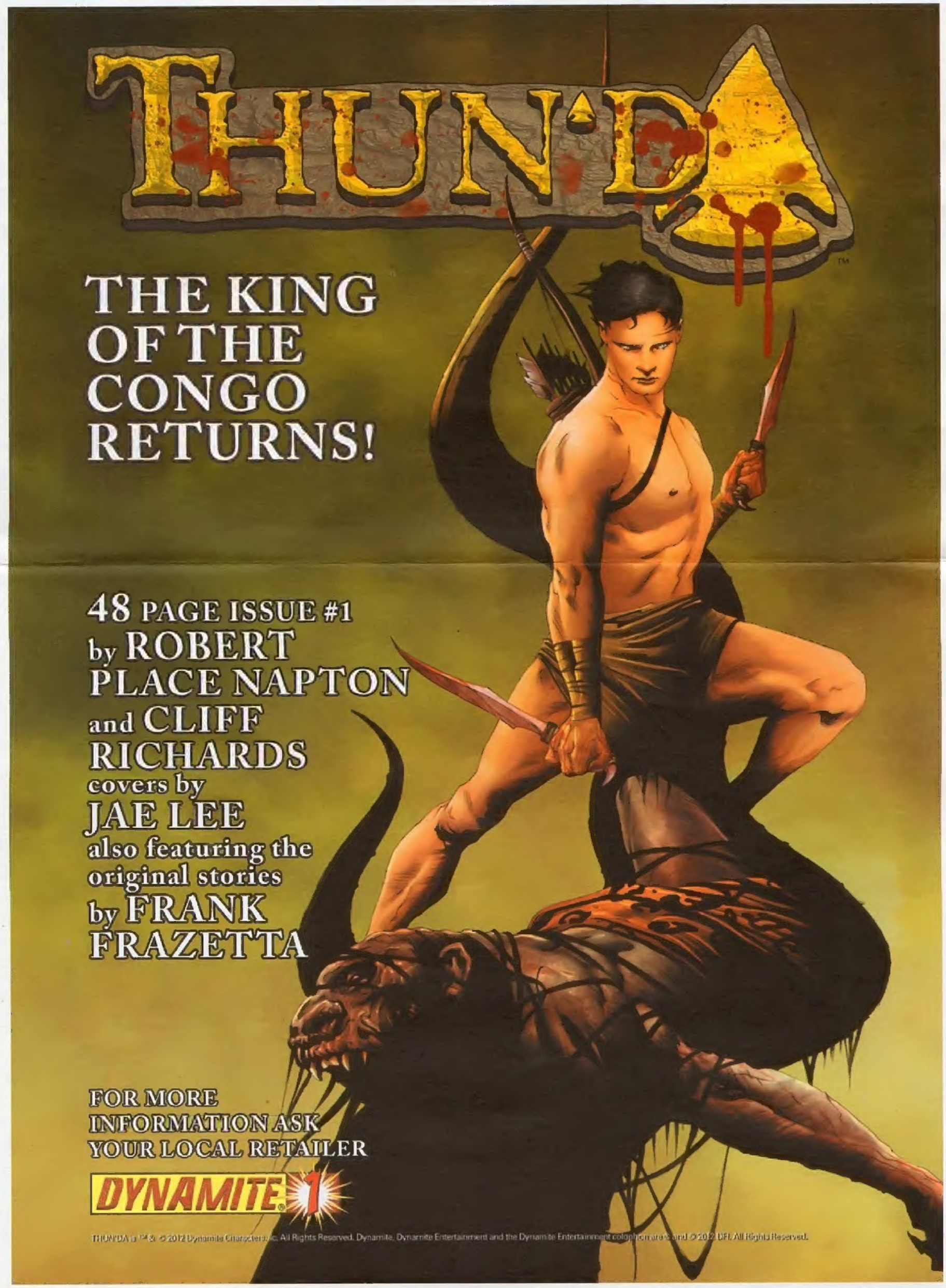
DARK KNIGHT RISES: BATMAN 1/12 SCALE STATUE

(DC Collectibles APR120304 $79.95)

DARK KNIGHT RISES: CAT-WOMAN 1/12 SCALE STATUE

(DC Collectibles APR120302 $79.95)

This trio of statues, all sculpted by *Dave Cortes,* offers dramatic sculpts based on this summer's film versions of Batman, Catwoman, and Bane.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BEGINNING WITH ISSUE #10

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